

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Delete the paragraphs from page 3, line 21 to page 7, line 11, and replace with the following:

--FIGS. 1-3 illustrate a closure and container package 20 in accordance with a first exemplary embodiment of the invention as comprising a container 22 and a dispensing closure 24. Container 22 has a body 26 and a cylindrical finish 28 that terminates in a mouth opening 30. Closure 24 includes a base 32 having a skirt 34 secured to container finish 28, such as by means of external threads or beads on finish 28 being engaged with internal threads or beads on skirt 34. Skirt 34 surrounds an opening 36 that is aligned in assembly with mouth opening 30 of container finish 28. A lid 38 is coupled to base ~~34~~ 32 by means of an integrally molded hinge 40. Hinge 40 may be of any suitable single-element or multiple-element type, with a dual-element hinge of the type disclosed in U.S. Patent 6,041,477 being currently preferred. Lid 38 includes a base wall 42 from which a spud 44 integrally extends. A fitment 46 is removably received over spud 44 on lid 38, and is suitably retained thereon such as by friction or small snap beads (not shown). Fitment 46 includes a flat annular base wall 48, a first annular wall 50 extending from the inner periphery of base wall 48 around spud 44, and a second annular wall 52 extending from the outer periphery of spud base wall 48. A circumferential bead 54 extends radially inwardly from wall 52 at a position spaced from base wall 48. Bead 54 may be circumferentially continuous or segmented.

Closure 24 is initially assembled to container 22 with lid 38 open, as illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2. The closure and container package may be supplied to the packager with the closure so assembled to the package and the lid open. To fill the

container with fluid product, a spout 56 of a filling machine is aligned with and may extend into mouth opening 30. Container 22 is thus filled with product 58 through mouth opening 30 and closure base opening 36. After the container has been filled with product and nozzle 56 has been removed, lid 38 is pivoted, for example by means of an automated machine arm 60, from the open position illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2 to the closed position illustrated in FIG. 3, in which lid 38 is adjacent to closure base 32. In this closed position, bead 54 on fitment 46 is engaged over an external circumferential bead 62 (which may be continuous or segmented) on container finish 28, so that fitment 46 is received and secured by snap fit over the end of the container finish. The package is now ready for shipment. In use by a consumer, lid 38 may be opened and pivoted away from closure base 32, which pulls spud 48 out of fitment 46. Fitment wall 50 thus effectively forms a dispensing opening through which product may be dispensed from the package. Fitment 46 remains connected to container finish 28 by means of interlocking snap beads 54, 62. The snap beads hold fitment 46 in sealing engagement with the axial end of the container finish. Fitment 46 preferably is recessed beneath the upper wall of closure base 32, as best seen in FIG. 3, to discourage removal of the fitment from the container finish. With lid 38 closed as illustrated in FIG. 3, spud 48 forms a plug seal within the fitment dispensing opening formed by wall 50.

FIGS. 4 and 5 illustrate a closure and container package 64 that is a modification to the package 20 of FIGS. 1-3. A container 66 includes a finish 68 that defines a mouth opening 70. A dispensing closure 71 includes a base 72 with a skirt 74 that is secured to finish 68 by means of one or more engaged beads or threads. The base wall 76 of closure base 72 also has an axially extending annular wall 78 that is received

in assembly within finish mouth opening 70 so as to form a plug seal within the finish mouth opening. An annular internal ledge or bead 80 on wall 78 receives an annular external bead 82 on an annular peripheral wall 84 of a fitment 86. As in the embodiment of FIGS. 1-3, fitment 86 also includes an annular base wall 88 and an inner annular wall 90 that forms a dispensing opening. Closure 71 also includes a lid 92 coupled to base 72 by a hinge 94. A spud 96 extends from lid 92 into the dispensing opening of fitment 86 formed by wall 90. As with the embodiment of FIGS. 1-3, fitment 86 is initially assembled to lid ~~72~~ 92 with the lid open, and is removably retained in position by friction or other suitable means. The container may be filled with product 58 with closure base 72 mounted on the container finish. Lid 92 is then closed to the position of FIG. 4, at which point bead 82 on fitment 86 is received by snap fit over bead or ledge 80 on closure base 72 to secure the fitment to the closure base. Thereafter, when lid ~~72~~ 92 is opened, the fitment forms a dispensing opening, into which spud 96 is received for plug sealing when the lid is closed.

In both embodiments of FIGS. 1-3 and 4-5 (and in the other embodiments to be described), the closure is molded as one unit with the lid connected to the base by the integral hinge. The closure is molded with the lid in the open position, and the fitment is either separately fabricated and assembled to the closure, or is molded onto the closure lid in a secondary molding operation, or is integrally molded on the closure lid using a two-material molding technique. However, it is important that the fitment not be firmly adhered to the lid, so that the fitment will become secured to the container finish or the closure base and release the lid when the lid is thereafter opened. The closure and fitment may be of suitable plastic construction such as polypropylene. The fitment alternatively may be of

softer plastic material, such as polyethylene, to enhance sealing engagement between the fitment and the container finish or the closure base, and between the fitment and the lid.

FIGS. 6-8 illustrate a closure and container package 100 in accordance with another embodiment of the invention as including a container 102 and a dispensing closure 104. Container 102 has a finish 106, and closure 104 has a base 108 that is secured to finish 106 by suitable threads or beads. Closure base ~~106~~ 108 has a base wall 110 from which an annular wall 112 projects for plug sealing engagement within the mouth opening 114 of container finish 106. In this embodiment of the invention, the fitment 116 includes a fitment base to which a dispensing valve 118 is secured. Fitment 116 has an outer peripheral wall 120 having an external snap bead 122, an annular base wall 123, and an inner peripheral wall 124 having an external snap bead 126. Bead 126 is received over an internal bead 128 on an annular wall 130 that extends from the base of the closure lid 132. Valve 118 is of suitable flexible resilient elastomeric material such as liquid silicone rubber, and has a dispensing opening such as the crossed slits 134 illustrated in FIG. 8. Valve 118 may be compression molded in situ on fitment 116, as described for example in U.S. Patent 5,927,567. Valve 118 alternatively may be molded onto fitment 116 in a two-stage molding operation, or may be fabricated separately and secured to fitment 116 by suitable adhesive or other securement elements not illustrated in the drawings. As initially fabricated by the closure manufacturer, lid 132 is open, as illustrated in FIG. 6, and fitment 116 is secured to lid 132 by interlocking beads 126, 128 on annular walls 130, 124. After container 102 has been filled with product 58, lid 132 is pivoted around hinge 135 to the closed position (FIG. 7), at which fitment 116 snaps beneath wall 112 of closure base 108. When lid 132 is thereafter opened by a consumer, for example, beads 126, 128

unsnap and fitment 116 remains secured to closure base 108 as illustrated in FIG. 8. Fluid product may then be dispensed from the package by inverting the package and squeezing the body of the container. Beads 126, 128 provide a mechanism for holding lid 132 closed between uses. A spud 133 on the underside of lid 132 prevents inadvertent opening of valve 118 during shipment and between uses.--